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Stephen A. Douglas

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Stephen A. Douglas, by William Garrott Brown. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., pp. 141.

This small volume is a valuable contribution to the political history of the United States and of the Democratic party during the eight years before the Civil war. Mr. Douglas was then the most prominent and the most influential man before the American people. He was the chief factor in shaping during those years the course of events which, instead of making him President, as he expected, plunged the Nation into bloody strife. His responsibility in the matter is clearly shown by the author, who describes himself in language of exceeding pathos as "an old soldier of the Confederacy, scarred with the wounds he took at Bull Run, looking back over a wasted life to the youth he sacrificed in that ill-starred cause."

The volume is written in a compact, terse, and vigorous style. It is worthy the attention of every one who would understand our political history under Presidents Pierce and Buchanan, the immediate predecessors of Abraham Lincoln.

W. S.

FIRST BRIDGE AT CEDAR FALLS.—Notwithstanding the "hard times," this town in its corporate capacity, has built during the past winter, a good substantial bridge across the Cedar river, at a cost of fifteen thousand dollars. This is a matter of much importance to those who travel westward. This bridge obviates the necessity of trusting to poor ferries or fording with a swift current and rough bottom at Waterloo. Besides the convenience of the bridge, the State road from Independence to Cedar Falls (now in excellent order) is shorter by several miles than the road via Waterloo. The bridge, which is one of the strongest and best in the State, was built by K. H. Kelly, of Iowa City. The whole time from the closing of the contract till the bridge was in crossing order, was eleven weeks, including the period of the heavy freshet. The work has been done quickly and well, and reflects much credit on the contractor, and must prove of immense benefit to the town.—*Cor. Dubuque Northwest, April 2, 1858.*

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